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ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION

ISSUES IN INTEGRATION: a background paper

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The ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION represents 94 public boards of education of all sizes and from all regions of the province which serve over 1,700,000 students and adult learners.

OPSBA speaks for public education in Ontario and represents the interests of public school trustees to the government, the public and the media.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In addition to the current Ministry of Education consultation process related to the "restructuring of elementary and secondary education", the Ministry of Education is proposing a number of legislative and policy changes related to special education students. These changes include the introduction, on May 30, 1991 of Bill 114, an Act to Amend the Education Act and certain other Acts with respect to special education; and a proposed Ministry Discussion Guide on Integration.

Bill 114 proposes a number of amendments to provisions dealing with trainable retarded pupils, hard-to-serve pupils and the nature of special education tribunals.

With regard to integration, the Education Minister announced on May 28, 1991 that a consultation process will be undertaken over the next year to "decide how best to further the integration of exceptional pupils into regular classrooms" in local, community schools. "Wherever possible - where it meets the pupil's needs and where it is the parent's choice - integration should be the preferred option".

Two issues in particular will be addressed: ways to ensure that parents are involved in special education decisions as full partners; and, the cost of integration. Human and financial resources and how these resources should be provided will be examined.

The target date for making the integration option available throughout Ontario is September 1992.

The method of delivering special education programs and services is currently discretionary for school boards. The Minister stated that "there should be more consistency in the options available [for special education students] from one school board to another". Provincial schools will continue to be an option for special education.

A number of issues need to be addressed, however, before any decisions should be made on the full implementation of the "integration option" by school boards:

- There must be a clarification of and a building of consensus on, terms
- Assessment and placement issues must be examined
- Conditions necessary for success of the integration option, including financial and human resources, must be put in place

How will integration be defined? What is meant by local community school and classroom? Is it anticipated that all schools will be equipped to offer the integration option or only certain schools within the jurisdiction of the school board?

Who is to make the decision for integration? What are the relative roles of the student, the parent and the school board in making this decision? What criteria are to be established to assist in making this decision? What, if any, arbitration process

needs to be established in the case of conflict with regard to the decision to integrate or not integrate?

To assist OPSBA Member Boards in developing responses to the Ministry of Education Discussion Guide on the Integration of Exceptional Students, and to provide some insight into these questions; OPSBA has developed the following background paper which identifies major issues, summarizes recent research in the field, and describes the current situation in Ontario as well as selected other provinces and the United States.

The background paper is divided into four major sections:

- The first section describes legislative and litigation actions that have had an impact on the delivery of special education services in Ontario.

- Section 2 presents a number of definitions of integration and/or mainstreaming; delineates assessment and placement issues; describes the various integration models currently being utilized; and stresses the need for monitoring and evaluation of the integration process.

- Section 3 focuses on issues that need to be addressed before the integration option is made available throughout Ontario. These issues include the need for an examination of the role of the education system in the provision of "special services"; teacher education; peer and parental attitudes; and financial and human resources.

- Section 4 summarizes the major conclusions of research studies on integration and outlines areas in which further research is required.

II. LEGISLATION & LITIGATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Background

International, national, and provincial legislative and litigative actions all have had an impact on the delivery of special education services in Ontario. The prime sources of legislation which govern the provision of educational services are the acts, regulations, and policies established through the Ministries of Education. Other legislative sources include those which regulate such areas as professional services, social services, health services, buildings, and safety. Human rights legislation, outlined by MacKay (1986), has been a relatively recent development and could have a major impact on educational services. Litigation under educational legislation (Manley-Casimir and Sussel, 1986) has also affected educational service developments.

The literature indicates that legislation and litigation have promoted and will continue to promote the right to a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment for all children as legislators, parents, and professional advocates press for new laws. (Murray Hayes, 1989)

Legislation

▸United States

The American legislation, Education for All Handicapped Children, Public Law 94-142, 1975 is regarded as having been particularly significant and influential for Canadian education.

The purpose of this law which defined the educational rights for children with disabilities was

> *to assure that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs, to assure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents and guardians are protected, to assist States and localities to provide for the education of all handicapped children, and to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate handicapped children.*

The basic provisions included in the American legislation ensure that each state and local school system has a plan for:

- appropriate education at no cost for every child;
- systematic screening and identification procedures;
- informed consent of parents before evaluation and placement;
- due process procedure;
- consultation with the parents or guardians about the child's evaluation, placement, and educational plan;
- written individual educational plan for each handicapped child;
- education of each child in the least restrictive environment;
- placement to the furthest extent possible in a classroom with non-handicapped children;

- evaluation which is multidisciplinary and nondiscriminatory;
- training for special and regular teachers and other personnel. (Hayes, 1989)

▸Canada

Since education is a provincial responsibility, there is no federal legislation equivalent to the above. (Alberta Education) All the provinces and territories in Canada have, however, enacted some form of legislative responsibility for the education of exceptional children but they vary considerably, with Ontario's being by far the most comprehensive. (Ken Weber, 1988)

Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan have mandatory legislation which guarantees access to special education. British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and the Territories have permissive laws which allow the option of providing special educational services to handicapped children but school boards are under no legal obligation to do so. Alberta requires that a school board provide for the education of each child resident in its district. Through policy, Alberta Education expects school districts to identify children with special needs and subsequently provide them with appropriate education programs. (Alberta Education)

Manley-Casimir and Sussel (1986) and Hadder (1986) note that all provinces have some form of exclusionary clause based on behavioural problems or severity of problems that deal with the student who cannot benefit from a school program. Saskatchewan has a clause for exclusion from a specific program but not from alternate programs provided by the school board or from other appropriate services.

Both Saskatchewan and Quebec human rights codes have included reference to education as a protected right. Education as a protected right has not been included by the remaining provinces. (Manley-Casimir & Sussel, 1986 in Murrey Hayes, 1989)

The challenge for educators and legislators is to develop regulations and policies that will guarantee the rights of exceptional children, without impinging on the rights of others, and without weakening the capacity of the system generally. It is not an easy task, and litigation continues in Canada and the United States with varying degrees of intensity and frequency. (Ken Weber, 1988)

▸Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Endicott (1987) and MacKay (1986) both outlined the importance of Sections 1, 7, and 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* cited below.

> **Section 1**
> The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Section 7
Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.

Section 15 (1)
Every individual is equal before the law and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, and in particular, based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

The issues that have been raised about the *Charter* include the degree to which courts may take an active role in interpreting the provisions, the influence on Canadian decisions of some court decisions in the United States, and the degree to which courts will intrude into provincial education matters. Other issues have centered on whether or not the right to an education is included, the degree to which an obligation to provide educational services to all children might be expressed in terms of placement and programming, and the implications for those provinces which have permissive special education legislation. (Murray Hayes, 1989)

Litigation
The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1985) applies to all provincial school legislation and, therefore, allows parents to challenge the validity of statutes that would exclude exceptional children from access to an education. Parents are also citing the Charter of Rights in their challenges to school officials regarding special education assessment and placement decisions. (Alberta Education)

The Charter of Rights will continue to have a significant impact in the future in that the Courts may review special education placement decisions and/or program decisions based upon guarantees in the Charter under section 7, "appropriate education" or with the "equal benefit of the law" protections under section 15. (Alberta Education)

A key lesson that seems to be arising from special education litigation in Canada is that in those jurisdictions where mechanisms of appeal and negotiation are not set in education legislation; appellants will turn to the civil courts, with the result that the judiciary, and not professional educators, are asked to resolve individual educational rights issues. The first difficulty with this avenue of redress is that the situation for the exceptional child almost automatically becomes adversarial, and the potential for cooperation, so crucial in the education of an exceptional person usually disappears. Time and expense are also serious concerns, as well as the interim placement of the child in question. perhaps most serious of all, the outcome of civil court legislation is more likely - and naturally - to be based on what is legally correct than on what is educationally right. (Weber, 1988)

A report entitled Special Education Information Sharing Project (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 1989) states that across Canada there are ongoing efforts to maximize special education placements by providing as much integration with the regular school population as possible. In addition, the provinces and territories are ensuring that legislated guarantees are being provided. There is also a trend towards definitions based upon instructional needs and policy directions which promote integration wherever possible. The report concludes that:

> "All Children, regardless of exceptionalities, are first of all children and benefit from regular association with other children within their own communities." (in Alberta Education)

Ontario Legislation

▸Bill 82

Bill 82, the Education Amendment Act (1982) details the principles, policies and procedures with regard to the education of exceptional pupils.

Section 8(2) of the Act imposes statutory obligations on the Minister of Education to

> "Ensure that all exceptional children in Ontario have available to them...appropriate special education programs and special education services ...and shall provide for the parents or guardians to appeal the appropriateness of the special education placement."

Section 149 (7):

> "Every board shall, before the 1st day of September, 1985, provide or enter into an agreement with another board to provide, special education programs and special education services for its exceptional pupils."

Bill 82 defined the 'exceptional pupil' as one

> ...whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he is considered to need placement in a special education program... [1, (1) 21]

'Special Education Program' was defined as one that is

> ...based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil. [1. (1) 63]

'Special Education services' are

> facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program [1. (1) 64].

The Act also establishes a method for identifying the particular needs of each exceptional pupil and for determining the appropriate educational placement of that pupil. These tasks are the function of the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

The philosophy, the legal structure, and the practice of special education in Ontario today is founded on the right of every student to have access to publicly supported education, no matter what his or her needs. Provincial legislation ensures this, and lays down procedures to guarantee it will take place. However the style and nature and day to day procedures of education are generally left to individual boards of education to interpret in their own way according to local needs and conditions.

On the matter of mainstreaming...Ontario law...does not mandate the 'least restrictive or most enabling environment'...it does however specify 'suitable programming' for exceptional students, and implicit in the Ministry of Education's Special Education Information Handbook, 1984, is the notion that this can best be achieved if a variety of settings is available.

Boards are encouraged to provide, directly or indirectly, a continuum of service that would provide as full a range of placements as possible ...(Weber, 1988)

The five basic principles that were enshrined in the Ontario legislation were:

- the right to an appropriate educational program for all exceptional children;
- the right of free education without charge to the pupil or the family;
- the right of appeal of identification and placement, and the right to a review hearing by the exceptional children, their parents, and their advocates;
- the right to an appropriate program that states objectives and outlines services that will meet exceptional children's needs;
- the right to continuous identification of needs and continuous assessment and evaluation of the student's progress. (Hayes, 1989)

▸Important Results of Present Ontario Legislation

1. Prior to the passage of Bill 82, school boards in Ontario provided special education only if they chose to do so. The legislation removed the hitherto optional status of special education and makes it a definite responsibility of each school board in the province.

2. Universal access of all Ontario school age pupils to a publicly supported education is guaranteed, regardless of a pupil's special needs. Before the passage of Bill 82, some school boards did not provide instruction for some exceptional pupils on the premise that there were no programs or services, or expertise available locally, or because there was no funding.

3. Parents and guardians of exceptional pupils have now become very much involved, legally, with the education of their exceptional children. They now have a right to be involved in the identification and placement of these pupils, and further, have the right to withhold permission for a particular placement, or even for a psychological or health assessment. They also have the right to require a review of a placement. (Weber, 1988)

Further matters which Bill 82 and subsequent regulations have brought about as standard practice in the province:

a) each school board in Ontario is required to prepare and make available throughout its jurisdiction, a 'Special Education Plan' describing its services and general procedures for special education. The Plan must be approved and regularly reviewed by the Ministry of Education. Amendments must be approved by the Ministry. The plan must be available to parents and guardians in the jurisdiction along with advice on its interpretation.

b) For every pupil identified 'exceptional' and placed in a 'special education program', there must be an education plan which states the specific objectives for that pupil, and includes an outline of the educational services that have been arranged for him or her.

c) a school board is required to establish a special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) whose role is to represent the community, particularly those constituents who reflect the needs and desires of exceptional pupils. The SEAC is to make recommendations to the board in matters regarding special education programs and services.

d) In a very few cases, a principal of a school may decide that an exceptional pupil, because of a mental handicap, or a mental handicap plus one or more additional handicaps, is unable to profit from instruction offered by the school board, and should therefore be deemed 'hard to serve'...The costs of a 'hard to serve' placement are borne by the province.

Parents are to be completely involved in this procedure, and there are specific appeal procedures available where there is disagreement.

e) A school board may enter into an agreement with another school board, to provide special education programs and services for its pupils. (Weber 1988)

▸Recent Amendments

Recent legislative developments in the provision of special education services include the introduction of Bill 114. These amendments will further alter the current provision of programs for special education students in this province in that Bill 114 proposes to:

- revoke the provisions dealing with trainable retarded pupils;
- revoke the provisions dealing with hard-to-serve pupils;

- eliminate the regional special education tribunals and streamline the procedure for appealing the decisions of appeal boards to the new Ontario special education tribunal;

- permit minority language sections of boards to establish their own special education advisory committees; and,

- permit the area boards in Metro Toronto to take over the provision of special education programs and services for pupils with developmental handicaps who are now being served by the Metro Toronto School Board.

With regard to integration, the Minister has stated the government's intent to "ensure that there is more consistency in the options available for special education students from one school board to another" and "that the integration option will be available in all school boards".

These statements raise a number of legislative questions:

- School boards currently have a great deal of discretion with regard to the types of programs that they offer for special education students (as detailed below). What effect will the requirement for the integration option have on the assessment and placement process? Is it the intent of the Minister that the integration option will be open to all regardless of exceptionality?

- If the integration option is to be available in the local community school, what does this imply for the current ability of school boards to purchase services from other boards? Does this mean all boards, public, Catholic and French will be required to offer the full range of options for "exceptional pupils" ?

These and other legislative questions related to Charter challenges need to be addressed by the Minister before the full-scale implementation of the integration option.

III. DEFINITIONS

Definitional concerns are at the heart of the integration issue for implicit in the definition of integration are assessment, placement and program issues.

What is Integration?
When attempting to define what is meant by the term integration, it becomes readily apparent there are very diverse views on what integration actually means:

> *To some parents and advocates, "integration" means the full inclusion of exceptional students in regular classrooms in neighbourhood schools. For some, integration also means that the exceptional child will participate in the regular school curriculum. Others expect that integration will provide opportunities for special needs students to interact socially with other children their own age, but that these students will have an individualized program plan for instruction. A third group of advocates, particularly some parents of children with learning disabilities and children with impaired hearing support segregated programs.* (Alberta Education)

Examples of the diverse definitions of integration and/or mainstreaming as offered by various concerned associations, follow. The terms integration and mainstreaming are used interchangeably by the various authors examined.

1. The Council for Exceptional Children defines integration as "an educational placement procedure for exceptional children based on the conviction that **each child should be educated in the least restrictive environment** in which his or her educational and related needs can be satisfactorily addressed".

   Under suitable conditions, education within the mainstream can provide the optimal opportunity for many exceptional children. Consequently, the system for the delivery of special education must enable the incorporation of special help and opportunities for them in mainstream settings...Children should spend only as much time outside regular classrooms as is necessary to control learning variables that are critical to the achievement of specified learning goals. (The Council for Exceptional Children, 1973)

2. The Canadian Education Association states that "integration consists of educating exceptional and non-exceptional children in the same classroom but provides special education services based on specific needs rather than on one category of handicap. Integration is not a return of exceptional children to regular classes but a process which creates alternatives to help educators serve exceptional children in the regular setting but with the support services they require. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

3. The mainstreaming concept is educating most children in regular classrooms and providing special education on the basis of learning needs, rather than a category of a handicap. Children with learning needs can receive help from special education teachers without being labelled or segregated from peer

associations. Mainstreaming will bring about an amalgamation of regular and special education to provide a range of services for all children according to learning needs. Under the mainstreaming system, special education will be a resource for the entire school population and not an isolated body of skills and knowledge adjusted to a minute population. (Department of Special Education, University of Illinois, 1974)

4. Mainstreaming refers to the temporal, instructional and social integration of eligible exceptional children with normal peers based on the ongoing, individually determined, educational planning and programming process and requires clarification of responsibility among regular and special education administrative, instructional and supportive personnel. (Kaufman et al., 1975) (the above are quoted in Howarth, 1983)

Because the concept of "least restrictive environment" is crucial to the implementation of integration, the following reiteration is included (as quoted in the Alberta paper):

> **Least restrictive environment** refers to having each child served in a setting that is as close to normal as possible while still meeting the special and unique needs of the child. The child is integrated into the regular physical and social settings to the maximum extent appropriate. (Alberta Education - A Background Paper)

▸Assumptions
As Howarth (1983) points out, deep assumptions can be seen in these definitions. It is assumed that:

- It is possible to provide an appropriate programme in a least restrictive setting
- Mainstreaming provides access to equal educational opportunity for the handicapped and the non-handicapped alike
- Education is strengthened by uniting the skills of general and special education
- The regular classroom teacher can learn to educate exceptional children within the regular classroom if special education support is given
- Every child should be educated in the regular classroom on the basis of individual learning needs, not on a category of handicap
- It is preferable for an exceptional student to be educated with non-exceptional peers.

▸Main Components of a Definition of Integration

Murray Hayes, in a paper written for the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (1989), clarifies the concept by summarizing the main points which define Integration:

Integration does

- educate all children in regular school buildings and with regular activities and programs to the maximum extent possible.
- place children in the same school they would attend if they did not have special needs.
- provide an individualized program that is appropriate to needs and age.
- provide a program in the least restrictive environment.
- provide a program for most exceptional children in a regular classroom.
- provide a special education on the basis of educational needs rather than on clinical or diagnostic labels.
- provide special help and opportunities to exceptional children in the mainstream setting.
- provide out-of-regular-class programs only as is necessary to control learning variables critical to the achievement of specified learning goals.
- emphasize activities in which exceptional children can participate rather than activities in which they cannot participate.
- provide both access to and freedom of choice in the opportunities and environment available to the non-handicapped peers of exceptional children.
- provide the same schedule for exceptional and regular students.
- provide for learning in the non-school environment when appropriate.
- provide program alternatives to help general educators who have students with learning and adjustment problems in regular settings.
- provide continued support to the regular schools by consultants, special educators, and specialists.
- unite special and regular education skills so that all children have equal opportunities.
- teach children to understand and accept individual differences.
- take parental concerns seriously.
- adapt itself to a variety of settings.

Integration does not

- return on a wholesale basis all exceptional children to regular classes.
- eliminate all special classes.
- eliminate all special education teachers.
- ignore needs of some children for a more specialized program than can be provided in a general education setting.
- place exceptional children in regular programs without preparation and support.
- isolate children with special needs in separate programs, schedules, or physical areas.

- group students with wide ranges of disabilities and needs in the same program.
- ignore individual needs.
- expose children to unnecessary hazards or risks.
- place unreasonable demands on teachers and administrators.
- place children with disabilities at schools or in programs for younger children.
- stop at physical integration of exceptional children without trying to integrate them socially and intellectually.
- cost less than serving children in self-contained classrooms.

Definitions can only serve as a superficial introduction to the issue; however, for, as Ken Weber points out, implementation is the bone of contention:

> *At present, the controversy over mainstreaming is not over integration versus segregation, for almost all educators agree today, that integration (i.e., mainstreaming) of all students is a desirable end. Rather, it seems to grow out of just how the concept is to be translated into action. Its most vigorous advocates...regard the principle as pure and absolute...Generally, these advocates do not object to the provision of services, or special education, provided it all takes place in the mainstream. Their position is that the greatest benefit will accrue to the exceptional student, simply by being in the regular class, modelling normal behaviour, and participating in normal, age-appropriate activities.*
>
> *Most educators...although firm supporters of mainstreaming, do not view the matter quite so unconditionally. This group contends that circumstances may make it desirable, indeed necessary, for some exceptional students to be placed in a slightly more restrictive environment ...within a regular school for a portion of their program...Educators taking this position hold that realistically, not all exceptional students can thrive in the pure mainstream...*
>
> *Proponents of "pure" mainstreaming contend however, that the mere availability of a spectrum of settings tempts all concerned to ignore the inherent principle of full integration...The very existence of alternative settings...will make full integration fail for the very simple reason that it does not have to work.*
>
> *...It is unfortunate that a polemic arises out of these two viewpoints since, in the end, both groups ...agree that complete integration is best for the exceptional student, for those students receiving an exceptional person into their midst, and for the school and society at large. They simply cannot agree on the mechanics.*
>
> *Unfortunately a resolution is not easy to achieve. Research...is entirely equivocal on the matter of what kind of mainstreaming is best. Empirical evidence is always very case-specific. It is almost impossible to generalize from the success or failure of one, or even several, situations.* (Weber, 1988)

A definition is useful only inasmuch as it delineates the goal to be achieved. Although the experts agree on the ideal integrated situation, in practice, there are key issues which must be confronted and dealt with. Implementation questions cannot be separated from definitional concerns.

Assessment and Placement

Theoretically, school boards face the task of providing the 'ideal' for every exceptional child. Therefore the school must assess and place each child, then choose from a spectrum of options the best method of delivering instruction to that child.

When dealing with assessment and placement issues, two fundamental questions immediately come to mind: on what basis are placement decisions to be made and who is to make these decisions?

In Mainstreaming - Some Issues for School Boards, (1985) the Canadian Education Association reported that determining which children will be mainstreamed and which will be segregated is a principal issue facing school boards. Experts agree that there must be a selective placement of children into regular programs; not all exceptional pupils should or can be integrated. Developing assessment and placement procedures calls for a careful examination of a child's educational needs rather than the grouping of children based on a category of handicap.

▸On what basis are placement decisions made?

Legislative requirements and school board policies were identified by school boards in the Canadian Education Association (1985) survey as the basis for placement decisions.

The literature in general and the Canadian Education Association, in particular, agree that placement decisions be selective because not all exceptional students can or should be integrated. Decisions should be based on parents' wishes, needs of the student, regular class suitability, resource availability, and both teacher attitudes and competencies. Other factors for consideration include the student's social and academic abilities as opposed to category of disability, age appropriate placement, and multi-aged classes. (Hayes, 1989)

Pupils are placed in an appropriate program after they have been carefully assessed which may consist of many components: testing, observation of the pupil at work and at play; conversations with the pupil's parents and teachers; discussions with the pupil and his or her peers; an examination of past performance; informal teacher made tests, standardized tests, special tests for particular purposes and individual psychological tests. The placement decision must be based on the needs of the child and the resources available to fulfil those needs. Most Canadian school boards base their placement decision on the policy of the "least restrictive environment".

The concept of integration and of the least restrictive environment is a commitment to match as closely as possible the needs of an exceptional student with the resources available. Not all exceptional students can be placed in regular classrooms and not

every school can provide every service to every child. However, the concept of the least restrictive environment remains the guide for determining the most appropriate educational placement for a child. (Candadian Education Association, 1985)

Mary Howarth, in a paper prepared for the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, states that one essential element for successful integration is the "early identification of learning problems which, if left undetected, can develop into serious secondary psychological problems due to frustration and failure." After identification, most researchers feel that specific teaching within the regular class setting with an individualized program is the best beginning for most children.

According to Howarth the research also tells us that certain minority groups, culturally deprived groups and children under pressure due to home problems are often not accurately assessed.

In the actual survey conducted by the Canadian Education Association school boards reported that the decision to integrate exceptional students in the regular program was based on the following (in this order):

1. the needs of the students
2. the suitability of the regular class for the exceptional student; how successfully can a child fit into the regular classroom
3. the pupil's ability: generally the degree of exceptionality was determined by the results of an assessment; in some cases, children were integrated primarily because of staff recommendations. In others, teacher attitudes toward a particular disability was an influential factor.
4. finances; whether or not the school and class had the appropriate resources.

Some school boards have a policy that all but the most severely handicapped children must be integrated. A handful of school boards mentioned that the age of the student was an important factor, while a few said the wishes of the parents were the most significant factor in placement.

In some, the exceptional child's ability to succeed in the regular class, and the class's ability to adapt, are the most important considerations in determining whether a pupil will be integrated or not. Integration depends upon the child's ability to cope socially with the class's age group and his or her ability to participate academically. A child is integrated when it is believed he or she will benefit, bearing in mind the abilities and attitudes of the regular classroom teacher. In most cases, the exceptional child is given a chance to show what he or she can do in the regular classroom.

The Canadian Education Association survey found that, in general, the less severe the handicap the greater the extent of integration. The Association's survey found that school boards offered a variety of programs ranging from segregated and partially integrated to fully integrated. School board integration practices ranged from the most to the least integrated for the physically handicapped, educable mentally retarded, and

learning disabled, hearing impaired, visually impaired, trainable mentally retarded, and emotionally disturbed. A limited number of boards in the survey integrated every type of exceptionality. The same survey reported that it was preferable for each child to follow an individual program after a thorough referral, assessment, and case conference procedure was completed that identified the best option or options for the pupil. (Hayes, 1989)

Administrators, according to Howarth, should not place several exceptionalities in one classroom. There will not be enough time for the teacher to take the appropriate in-service courses in each exceptionality. (Howarth, 1983)

The background paper prepared by Alberta Education defines 'exceptional students' as "those students who require a different program or an adaptation or modification to the regular school program". (Alberta Education, Policy Manual, 1989) Although the trend is to delabel and assess each child individually, the following categorization is included to stress the fact that identifying and placing the special child is a complicated matter.

Severely Disabling Conditions

- Dependent Mentally Handicapped
- Severe Behaviour Disordered
- Multi-Handicapped
- Severe Physically Handicapped
  -including neurological disorders
- Deaf
- Blind

Mildly/Moderately Disabling Conditions

- Educable Mentally Handicapped
- Trainable Mentally Handicapped
- Behaviour Disorder*
- Learning Disabled
- Hearing Impaired - Hard-of-Hearing
- Visually Impaired - Low Vision
- Speech and Language Impaired

Gifted and Talented (Grades 1-12 only)

Identifying and placing children remains a complicated issue with no hard and fast rules. The following was reported by the Peel Board of Education in the Canadian Education Association survey:

> *One of the very great difficulties is that the terms used to describe exceptional students are often vague. The terms used to describe special students have changed dramatically over the past two decades, with learning disabilities and*

hyperactivity being basically less than 20 years old. While there is general agreement about vision or hearing impairment (although even here there is some debate), there is little agreement about what is meant by such terms as "learning disability" or "behaviour problem". While some contend that a learning disability involves an actual perceptual or cognitive disorder, there has been no success in isolating any of these; in practice a learning disability may be just another name for underachievement, where a student's performance is not equal to his or her ability. Similarly, the official definition of behavioral exceptionalities is so broad as to be practically meaningless. (Peel Board of Education, "Referral and Placement Decisions in Special Education", Research Bulletin, April, 1983, number 17).

▸Who makes placement decisions?

In the Canadian Education Association survey (1985), school boards were asked "Who, in fact, makes the final decision to place an exceptional pupil in an integrated program?"

The majority of the school boards reported that placement decisions were made by a school committee in consultation with parents.

- 54 boards said decisions are made by a school committee, often called the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Ontario law mandates that a committee of a least three persons be appointed to review relevant information concerning pupils, to identify whether or not the pupil is exceptional, to determine an appropriate special education placement, and to review the placement at least once a year.
- 29 indicated that one of their consultants makes the placement decision;
- 28 said it was done by the school principal;
- 13 said both the principals and the teachers decided;
- 9 reported that the parents' wishes were the determining factor.

In the report Integration: A Review of the Current Literature, prepared under the auspices of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association Research Centre, the prescriptive team approach is recommended for identification and assessment. (Howarth (FWTAO, 1983), the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (1986) and Striefel (1986)) This includes data gathering by a team composed of the regular teacher, parents, principal, and a methods and resource specialist, as well as other professionals and outside personnel. The physical, social, emotional, and academic or intellectual strengths and weaknesses along with learning styles and necessary resources are identified through this process, the purpose of which is to provide data for development of a comprehensive and specific education program for each student.

▸Appeal Process

The central role of parents in the assessment and placement process is stressed in the literature on integration. As previously discussed, in those jurisdictions where mechanisms of appeal and negotiation are not set in education legislation; appellants will turn to the civil courts.

Any proposals for change to the current special education provisions in Ontario in which emphasis is to be placed on the integration option; a balance between the roles of the child, parent and education personnel in the assessment and placement process must be guaranteed. This, however, is not enough. In addition, an appeal and arbitration mechanism must be put in place to deal with cases of conflict with regard to the decision to integrate or not integrate.

Models of Instruction

Assessment and placement are not the only issues; however, for as stated in the Saskatchewan report, Meeting Challenging Needs:

> *Integration is often viewed as a one focus issue - and that focus is placement. Those who have implemented integrated placements have found that this is not the case. Integrated placements are but the beginning. There are a host of other issues - the appropriateness of the educational program and the quality of the social interaction being two of the most important requiring attention and implementation.*

In practice, integration is defined by the nature and types of available programs.

> *From an pragmatic perspective, the success of any style of mainstreaming will ultimately be determined in the classroom, on a by-case basis. Whether the exceptional student is in a totally integrated setting, or in a modified setting, the situation will rise or fall on the willingness and the ability of the teachers and the students - including the exceptional student - to make the mainstreaming succeed.* (Ken Weber, 1988)

There are several ways of providing instruction to exceptional children. Ken Weber summarizes the various options:

- boards are encouraged to provide, directly or indirectly, a continuum of service that would provide as full a range of placements as possible ...
- the degree of supplementary assistance...can be in the regular classroom (in many cases), through the provision of specialized consultation to the teacher, special equipment, and the availability of additional persons with specialized skills or tasks to perform.
- to achieve a more intense learning experience it may be deemed advisable to provide a setting in which a greater degree of individualization is possible...the pupil may meet periodically with a qualified special education teacher...on an individual or small group basis...(which) permits the pupil to maintain a regular class placement.
- some pupils require a more highly specialized setting...the self-contained special education classroom may be recommended.

- some children whose complexity of need has been unresponsive to traditional methods of help (may require) different collaborative forms of therapeutic and educational intervention in a variety of settings.

Most boards of education interpret the provincial legislation, particularly 'suitable programming', as both obligation and encouragement to place exceptional students in the environment that will best enable them to learn.

The Cascade Model (below) is often used as an explanatory principle of their attempts to place exceptional students in the least restrictive, most enabling environment.

Since the ideal (full integration in the regular classroom) is not always possible or appropriate, school boards rely on the options presented in the Cascade Model. "This model presents a variety of service delivery options, ranging from full integration to full segregation...(as) the least restrictive environment for each student depends upon that student's unique needs" (Alberta Education, 1991).

The Cascade Model

↑ Regular Class with Special Support ↓

↑ Regular Class With Withdrawal (Resource Room) ↓

Part-Time Special Class

↑ Full-Time Special Class ↓

Special School

↑ Correspondence ↓

Instruction in Special Setting

↑This way as far as possible
↓This way only to the extent necessary

No one integration instructional model will be appropriate for all students. A variety of instructional models have, of necessity, been developed in response to the need for models which are appropriate to the given exceptionality of the child. Brief descriptions of the most commonly used instruction models in integration are characterized below.

▸Individualized Instruction

The individualized instruction model is complete integration. It involves integration of regular and exceptional children in a school setting where all the children share the same resources and opportunities for learning on a full-time basis...where social and learning goals are adapted for every individual, protects the exceptional students within the group from developing perceptions of their exceptionality and perceptions of failure...the provision (in other words) of an individualized programme for every child...a way of eventually eliminating the need for remedial programmes for exceptional students.

The philosophy of this model is summarized by Wang (1981):

> *Traditionally, it has been believed that something is wrong with a student who does not succeed in a regular classroom situation. The standard solution in such cases has been to relegate the child to a more or less segregated special education program. It has been generally assumed that regular classroom teachers should not be responsible for adapting to the widely divergent instructional requirements of individual students and that a shared-time mainstreaming model (part time in the regular classroom, part time in a separate special education facility) was a reasonable compromise. It is contended here, however, that a more constructive approach emphasizes what must be done to increase the capability of the usual classroom learning environment for meeting individual needs instead of assuming that there is something wrong with the child who does not profit from a regular classroom situation. When one takes such an approach, the child's 'unique characteristics' are no longer acceptable excuses for 'dysfunctioning' in the school or for moving the child to a different and segregated environment.*

Arguments that have been made in favour of individualized instruction include:

- an exceptional child who is withdrawn for part of the day is unlikely to be a full participant in the class
- the opportunity for appropriately structured academic activity may be limited to the time spent in the resource programme.
- the self-image of the exceptional child is not enhanced by the visibility of a withdrawal programme
- each child is viewed as a unique individual with different learning needs
- elimination of labels and their stultifying effects on a child's growth and self-concept
- greater chance for social acceptance (they are not seen as deficient)
- true acceptance of human differences is fostered at an early age

Research has shown that successful integration using this model requires: the early identification of learning problems; delabelling; development of individualized programs; teaching of self-management skills; a comprehensive support system; multi-age grouping; team teaching; and, family involvement. (Howarth, 1983)

▸Resource Room Programme
The child is placed in a regular class for most of the time and in a special education resource room for several periods a week.

Proponents of the resource room model see the key to an effective resource room programme as the consultative services which are available to the resource room teacher. Unless the resource room teacher has access to a wide variety of specialists, the number and kinds of pupil disabilities can be overwhelming.

Arguments against the resource room program as stated in the literature include: the child's exceptionality is apparent; the child's self-image may suffer; children are diagnosed, labelled and treated when they might only have needed time to mature; there is conspicuous failure; and, the child's programme may only be appropriate for those short periods in the resource room. (Howarth, 1983)

▸Revolving Door Mainstreaming
A unique approach to the resource room model, this model is suited to the needs of gifted students (developed by Renzulli, 1978). It is based on a conception of giftedness as being a cluster of above average ability, creativity and task commitment. It allows such students to participate in a gifted programme at some point in the year for a particular topic which is on interest. It vastly increases the number of children who can receive gifted special education and minimizes concerns about elitism and provides an individual programme for each child when most needed. (Howarth, 1983)

▸Curriculum Modification
Designed for the integration of behavioral students who are also low achievers; this instruction model increases their chances of academic success.

The approach is based on the notion that "achievement precedes adjustment"; for example, as reading skills decrease, behaviour problems increase. Research shows that usually a student with behaviour problems is also underachieving in academic work.

This method of teaching mainstreamed students in the regular classroom is based on the belief that no one strategy represents the most effective mode of instruction. It is thought that a varied approach based on learning styles, learning rates, previous experiences and knowledge of the student is most effective. (Howarth, 1983)

▸Adaptive Learning Environment Model (ALEM)
This model is designed "to create school learning environments in which all students can learn basic academic skills and increase their confidence in their ability to learn and cope with the social and intellectual demands of schooling". (Epps & Tindal, 1987)

This method is based on the premise that all students learn in individual ways; therefore adaptive instruction is a feasible way for students to learn. ALEM consists of five major components:

1. a basic skills curriculum;
2. an instructional management system designed to maximize the use of resources;
3. a family involvement component designed to increase communication and cooperation;
4. a flexible grouping and instructional team system;
5. a data-based staff development program.

Students work individually and in small and large groups under the supervision of teachers. Instruction is individually planned and students progress through the curriculum at their own pace. Students are also taught to plan and monitor their own learning in cooperation with teachers. Special education support personnel provide diagnostic consultation and remedial instruction. Through the use of an ongoing staff development delivery system, implementation of the program is monitored and refined.

Research (Epps & Tindal, 1987) shows "consistent, positive trends regarding the feasibility of implementation and the effects of the program both on students' achievement in basic skills and on their social behaviour and attitudes". (Alberta Education)

▸Integrated Classroom Model

This model is designed to increasingly integrate handicapped and non-handicapped students by tailoring regular education to meet the needs of special needs students, and special education to meet the needs of non-handicapped students. Mildly handicapped and non-handicapped students (1:2 ratio) are instructed together using regular school curricula and materials. Each student is assigned to an age-appropriate class in their neighbourhood school with a target enrolment of 24 students per class. All teachers in integrated classrooms have some special education training.

▸Inclusive Schooling Model

Inclusive schooling is based upon a philosophical belief that all students including those with severe disabilities are to be included in the mainstream of the school and in community life. This means that all students including exceptional students who live in a community would attend the regular neighbourhood school with their age appropriate peers as they would if they were not labelled as having a disability (Brow, et al., 1989).

Characteristics of inclusive schools include:

- Specialized services and supports are provided in the regular classroom to whomever is in need.
- The curriculum is adapted whenever necessary to meet the needs of exceptional students for whom the standard curriculum is deemed inappropriate.
- Natural supports both for students and staff are encouraged through cooperative and collaborative activities in the school community.

- Teachers and other school personnel are empowered to make decisions as to how the combined resources will be used to meet the needs of each of the students in the school. (Stainback & Stainback, 1990 in Alberta Education)

▸Collaborative/Consultative Model

This model can be viewed as a natural outgrowth of the move towards providing services to students in the least restrictive environment. Idol describes it as "a process for providing special education services to students with special needs in which special education teachers, general education teachers, other school professionals, or parents collaborate to plan, implement, and evaluate instruction conducted in general classrooms for the purpose of preventing or ameliorating students' academic or social behaviour problems". The goal of this model is to develop parity between regular and special education teachers in which ownership of the learning and behaviour problems of all students in the classroom is shared (West & Idol, 1987).

Benefits if implemented properly:

- a reduction of stigma
- a better understanding across disciplines
- increased special education skills for regular teachers
- reduction of mislabelling
- increased benefits to regular students (Huefner, 1988).

This model is not designed to have special education teachers delivering special education instruction in the regular classroom. Rather, the intent is for regular classroom teachers to receive appropriate support services to enable them to successfully instruct exceptional children. While the philosophical basis for this model is sound, there have been few well designed studies which demonstrate whether the collaborative/consultative model is program effective (Huefner, 1988 in Alberta Education)

▸Commonly Used Models

The commonly used instruction models in integration (as reported by the Canadian Education Association, 1985) are:

1) individualized instruction within the regular class;
2) regular class instruction with support services;
3) regular class instruction with withdrawal to a resource room program;
4) part-time special class instruction with some integration for certain subjects;
5) full-time special class instruction with integration for certain school activities.

The school boards that were surveyed provided for the needs of exceptional students as follows:

- 84 boards used the resource room program;
- 68 boards ... individualized instruction;
- 32 boards ... remedial tutors and teacher aides;
- 27 boards ... full-time special classes.

In schools offering several integration models, the resource room program was predominant. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

▸Secondary School

In examining various instructional models for integration, there is a noticeable lack of research and analysis on integration models for secondary school students. The emphasis in the research is on the elementary classroom situation. Before the integration option is made available in all school boards in Ontario, the implications of this option on placement and program decisions at the secondary level must be carefully examined. The implications of integration on the current Ministry initiative to destream grades nine and ten and the restructuring of education must be evaluated.

▸Monitoring

Regardless of the model of instruction chosen, there must be careful monitoring of the implementation of integration and assessment of its outcomes.

When do we know that our efforts in special education have paid off? What indicators do we presently use to assess the outcomes of special education programming? What outcomes should we monitor?

Summary

The ideal goal is that of maximum possible integration. However, schools will encounter obstacles of a more practical nature in attempting to place exceptional students in the most enabling environment. The choice of a particular model of instruction is dependent on factors such as teacher preparation and attitudes, peer and parental attitude, not to mention the cost of changing the existing structures (be they physical, curricular or attitudinal) to accommodate the implementation of the ideal.

Reynolds & Birch (1988) cautioned that under certain conditions the mainstream cannot accommodate a child's unique needs. These conditions may include destructive behaviour, severe and multiple handicaps, and fragile medical or emotional states. (Alberta Education, 1991)

Not only are there definitional ambiguities and a variety of programs from which to choose; other intervening factors cannot be ignored. A sampling of other issues that must be taken into account when making integration decisions include: school board size and geographical location; the safety of other pupils; the availability of local expertise and support services; physical accessibility of the school; and cost.

IV. FACTORS CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

This section deals with the more salient issues school boards face in the implementation of integration which include clarification of the role of schools in the provision of support services; teacher education; parent and peer orientation; financial and human resources.

There must be adequate time and resources for teacher education. Research has shown that the success of any program designed for the full integration of exceptional pupils will rest on the attitudes of school board personnel. Successful integration will only be achieved if there is a high degree of commitment and support.

Before the integration option can be implemented, regardless of which instructional model is chosen, there must be adequate support services.

There must be time to prepare for change to ensure success. A program of integration requires a serious commitment of time and planned orientation activities from a school board. Once it has been decided that integration will be offered, the school principal, the regular classroom teachers, the exceptional pupils, the regular pupils, and the parents of both groups of students will all need to be prepared.

There must be a recognition, on the part of both the government and school boards that additional resources, both financial and personnel, must be provided before any programs are implemented. This requires a clear link between policy makers and financial decision makers.

Teacher Education

There is a great need to offer pre-service and in-service to educators who will be responsible for teaching and administering integration programs.

Teachers (and administrators) must be able to take appropriate pre-service or in-service education courses. The lack of preparation by regular classroom teachers was a major concern of the school boards surveyed by the Canadian Education Association (1985). It was found that teachers do not feel adequately trained to handle the needs of exceptional pupils.

▸Pre-service

School boards mentioned time and time again the need for pre-service training on exceptional children in Faculties of Education. Special and regular class teacher training programs at the university level must be carefully evaluated and brought in line with modern research and trends in the area of integration. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

Mary Howarth cites a study done in Arizona (Hill and Reed, 1982), which shows that teachers are experiencing greater and greater stress because they are performing a job they feel they are inadequately prepared to do. An overwhelming number of respondents to this survey stated that they felt poor teacher training was the number one negative aspect of mainstreaming and that mainstreaming can be improved through training.

The teachers in this study made the following recommendations:

- Teacher preparation programs in the future must become oriented towards a comprehensive approach for training teachers to work with children who have various academic, behavioral and physical handicapping conditions.

- Teacher training programs must place a greater emphasis on techniques and strategies that make use of the principles of behavioral psychology. This training will enable the teacher to help children develop more appropriate social behaviour.

- Teacher training institutions should be in the forefront in educational research that deals with the most effective strategies of intervention and remediation so they relate to the education of children with learning and behavioral problems.

If the goal in special education is to fully integrate, mandatory pre-service training for the regular classroom teacher is crucial to achieving that goal.

▸In-service

Poor teacher training is often named as the number one negative aspect of mainstreaming. Courses are needed which provide more direct contact with exceptional children and help teachers work with a variety of disabilities and with the available educational resources. Very specific skills are required by teachers in integrated classrooms. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

The teachers in a 1978 study (Smith) said the following skills should be included in in-service courses:

- Learn general concepts related to "how to", e.g. "how do LD children best learn?" or "how to get specialized support or services?" or "how to arrange a room to accommodate a specified disability?"

- Identify and put together individualized curriculum based upon identified and specified generic and individual needs and to describe the appropriate methods and channels of instruction for the individual child.

- Be able to administer tests which are often given now by specialized staff. Be able to conduct informal assessments in the academic and social domains. Emphasis should be upon test selection re purpose, validity and reliability (relevance and usefulness).

- Learn general concepts and skills related to increasing/extinguishing behaviour in the academic/social realm. The teacher should have counselling communication skills as well as more straightforward behavioral techniques. Within this context the teacher should become aware that behaviour is influenced by appropriate/inappropriate selection of content, application of methods, grouping strategies and environmental conditions.

- Identify and administer tests that uncover the strengths and weaknesses of a child's learning system.

- Learn the very crucial skills at the heart of special education. Write and implement programs that keep a pupil "turned on" regardless of his/her handicap so that the youngster has strong feelings of self worth and acceptance. This may include specific contingency-reinforcement type programs to increase or decrease the incidence of specified academic or social behaviour.

- Write and implement programs that are relevant in content, efficient in presentation, practical in implementation that foster independence, problem solving, generalization to multiple situations and other subjects.

A 1980 study (McCoy, Prehm and Lambert), identified the following instructional competencies as being central to any in-service training program:

- Sensitization to the needs of the handicapped and the teacher's shared role in the education of the handicapped.

- Management. The teachers learn to focus on the specific and observable behaviours of their students.

- Good teaching practices refer to the application of learning principles to the delivery of instruction. The teachers are taught such procedures as shaping, cueing and fading within their own classrooms.

- Individualization. This unit is carried out in the teacher's classroom during a five week period. The classroom teacher adapts some aspect of the curriculum or some materials to provide for the needs of one or more mainstreamed students. (the above studies are cited in Howarth, 1983)

Other areas in which teachers feel they need more preparation are counselling and working with parents, being aware of their own attitudes toward exceptional pupils, and helping children in the integrated classrooms respect each other and work together.

Some of the in-service areas of particular benefit to administrators include integration models, adapting and elaborating curriculum and instruction for special needs students, assessment and monitoring procedures, placement criteria and process, parent counselling, and learning about community support services and school building facilities for special needs children. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

Administrators must become well-informed about legal requirements, so that the most effective programming can be planned for the special child in regular classroom settings. (Howarth, 1983)

Although most school boards provide some kind of preparation for staff members involved in integration, in many cases it is sporadic and informal. In-service training provides the best results when presented on an on-going basis for regular and special education teachers. Some of the improvements school boards would like to see in the area of in-service are more individual school staff training geared to the various types of exceptional students in the classroom; a long-term systematic plan in which new materials and new strategies are examined continually; more opportunities to share success stories with other teachers; a more formalized plan designed to provide in-service particularly on role descriptions and the responsibilities of staff involved; courses on content; more contact with parents; more documentation on Canadian efforts in this field; workshops to help regular classroom teachers make modifications to regular programs for exceptional students; and more ideas on how to handle the needs of the handicapped child in the regular class especially at the junior high and high school level.

There are other concerns school boards have about their staff. These concerns include equalizing the workload of the personnel, providing sufficient support for regular teachers, implementing individualized instruction with its resulting workload increase, scheduling classes and providing enough time and opportunities for teachers to consult with resource people and plan their programs. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

▸Teacher Attitude

The attitudes of special education teachers, regular teachers and non-teachers towards mainstreaming handicapped individuals were assessed by Schmelkin, 1981 (reported by Howarth, 1983).

In general, the Schmelkin study showed positive attitudes towards mainstreaming. This is in direct contrast to the negative attitudes which have been found in other studies (Aiello, 1978; Fiske, 1979; Greenber & Dolittle, 1977; Milofsky, 1977).

Schmelkin concluded that the reasons his results were atypically positive were that the regular teachers had all had experience teaching at least one handicapped child and all participants were enroled in courses related to mainstreaming (special education, nursing, school psychology). (Howarth, 1983)

Often the teacher's uncertainty is reflected in an unwillingness to accept integration and a negative attitude toward the program. Indeed, when school boards were asked to rate the reaction of certain groups to integration, regular program teachers were given the lowest rating of seven groups. The highest degree of acceptance for integration was found in special education personnel, followed by parents of exceptional pupils, exceptional pupils, school administrators, regular program pupils, parents of regular pupils, and finally regular program teachers.

It was often mentioned that teacher skills and attitudes were the most difficult issues to deal with from an administrative point of view. These were seen as critical variables in the success of mainstreaming. One boards says: "In some cases,

classroom teachers' roles and responsibilities were often misunderstood, leading to frustration and disillusionment. Adequate support services to ensure smooth integration were not provided. Insufficient in-service did not enable teachers to understand the children's needs and how to provide for them. There was also a need for improving the liaison between regular classroom teachers and special education personnel."

> *One problem we share, and this one is common to all divisions; some regular classroom teachers are not comfortable with a special student because they do not have realistic expectations, the pace is often very slow, and they have not been trained. In a case like this, the teacher will expect the resource teacher to take full responsibility. Yet, the regular teacher must take responsibility for the whole child.*
>
> *Here is where communications are so vital: the resource teacher must work with the classroom teacher as a team, provide insights and expectations (based on assessment), together plan programs and activities for which the child will obtain the most benefit. It is possible that the student may work on a totally individualized language arts program yet be successfully integrated in all other grade activities with subject assignments in science or social studies modified to the student's abilities.*
>
> *We must provide more training and awareness for regular class teachers so that they can be comfortable with a special needs program. To this end, resource teachers must act as professional development agents within their schools at staff meetings and through personal communications with teachers...Programs for training prospective teachers will have to be revamped. I hope this will occur in the very near future. Communication is the only way to keep teachers informed now. Until teacher training is revised, we must continue to build awareness through involving the teachers in programming, providing support by way of resource teachers, and providing in-service which addresses integration.* (Marie Sedor, Duck Mountain School Division No. 34, 1984)

Getting regular classroom teachers to understand integration and to approach it positively is a concern of many boards. There is an urgent need for co-operative, constructive dialogue within a school about the needs and programs of exceptional students. No integration program will work without the involvement and commitment and training of regular classroom teachers and the full co-operation of principals, the school administration and the board.

> *The key to effective communications, as in so many instances, is the school principal, who must foster, promote and nurture a climate in which a free and positive exchange of ideas, information and action plans for these students is possible. Everyone must know what everyone else is doing. What works and what doesn't? What techniques are best for this student? at what level? How can I support and reinforce your efforts? What have you discovered about this child which could be*

> *useful to me?* (John Lordon, Supervisor for Chatham School District No. 10, 1984)

One determinant of successful integration is the willingness of the teacher to adapt the curriculum to accommodate the individual needs of exceptional pupils. Here again, the teacher's attitude towards the child and the child's behaviour and performance largely determine the teacher's response.

> *The teacher's self-perception of her ability as well as her attitude toward the handicapped child in her class appear to be important factors in the integration process... The first competency required of a teacher is the ability to model acceptance of the handicapped child and to teach the children to value diversity. The classroom teacher helps most by facilitating acceptance.* (Dorothy Sokolyk, Mainstreaming in Quebec: Teacher Competencies in an Integrated Classroom. Montreal: Quebec Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, 1981.)

▸What have school boards done to inform and prepare educators, administrators and school support staff for successful integration?
In most cases, personnel preparation consists of meetings with resource people, speakers, workshops, consultation between staff, special professional development days, distribution of recent literature on mainstreaming including information on various options and techniques, system-wide discussion of the philosophy of integration, films, slide presentations, small group meetings, case conferences and visits to other schools. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

Howarth reports that teachers are not usually consulted about the placement of a mainstreamed child in their classroom. This has been identified as a weakness in mainstreaming implementation.

Some researchers have conducted studies which focus on what teachers think of mainstreaming practices. Those studies are quite revealing. In general, teachers are not against mainstreaming, but some strong reservations emerge regarding current practices.

> *Nothing of any consequence will ever change in education without the assistance and support of the classroom teacher.* (Roubinek, 1978).

> *Such a statement suggests that the success or failure of mainstreaming may be directly related to teacher attitude and with the ability of those in leadership positions to influence teachers to alter those attitudes which are antagonistic to the concept of mainstreaming and its being carried out in their schools and classrooms.* (Feitler and Dubasik, 1978).

A study by Vandivier and Vandivier (1981), reviewed research findings on teacher attitude and re-examined these past results in a new study.

Past research had demonstrated that:

- the success of mainstreaming will depend on the attitude of regular class teachers towards mainstreaming and towards exceptional students. (MacMillan et al., 1976).

- there is evidence to show that teacher attitudes do not differ significantly from the general public. (Parda & Bartel, 1972).

- Teachers have demonstrated a preference for a certain type of exceptionality. Learning disabled students were preferred to educable mentally retarded. (Shotel et al., 1972). Another study revealed that EMR was preferable to brain injured. (Warren and Turner, 1966).

In the re-investigation of these findings, Vandivier and Vandivier found that teachers favoured mainstreaming for the learning disabled child over the emotionally disturbed and for the emotionally disturbed over the educable mentally retarded. In general, their findings replicated those of previous studies. (in Howarth, 1983)

Support Services

The success of any integration of exceptional pupils into the regular classroom will rest, to a large extent, on the adequacy of the available support services. Regardless of the integration instruction model chosen, research has shown that there must be adequate support services and specialized personnel to assist the regular classroom teacher. In order for integration to work, a proper number of specialists and support services must be available to the teachers and students. These include speech and language therapists, nurses, hearing specialists, guidance counsellors, psychologists, health professionals and others. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

The provision of these services, however, is problematic for many school boards in which there is a shortage of both professional support personnel and financial resources. Innovative ways to meet these needs must be explored.

There is the need to answer the more fundamental question as to whether it is the role of the school system to provide these services or whether the school system should utilize the services of other agencies. In the past, there has been the tendency for other agencies and Ministries to "dump" the provision of these services onto the school system. There is the need for a coordinated approach to the provision of children's services in order to avoid unnecessary duplication. There is the need for collaboration and cooperation between the various agencies which provide support for these children.

Parental and Peer Education

> *With minor exceptions, mankind's attitudes toward its handicapped population can be characterized by overwhelming prejudice. The handicapped are systematically isolated from the mainstream of society. From ancient to*

modern times the physically, mentally, or emotionally disabled have been alternatively viewed by the majority as dangers to be destroyed, as nuisances to be driven out, or as burdens to be confined...Treatment resulting from a tradition of isolation has been invariably unequal and has operated to prejudice the interests of the handicapped as a minority group. (Weintraub & Abeson, 1976, quoted by Howarth, 1983)

▸Pre Integration

School boards were asked what they did to inform and prepare parents, students and the public for successful integration. The answers revealed that boards do plan activities that will make parents well-acquainted with the program. However, there was a noticeable lack of planned activities to prepare students for integration. Most of the preparation was very informal and a number of boards did nothing. (Canadian Education Association, 1985)

Modification of the attitudes of the regular classroom student must be of paramount concern. There is a great deal of research which shows that the handicapped child is in a low status position relative to the rest of the class. (Meyerowitz, 1965; MacMillan et al., 1974; Rucker, 1970, in Howarth, 1983)

Several factors have been identified as critical to understanding the root causes of negative attitudes towards the handicapped. It has been suggested that:

- Discriminatory responses may exist as relatively normal patterns of behaviour.
- Attitudes toward handicapped children and youth may exist whether or not the exceptional pupils have been formally 'labelled' and assigned to a special education program.
- The attitudes of normal class children are influenced by the beliefs and attitudes of significant others with whom they relate.
- The attitudes of regular class students toward the handicapped are influenced by a variety of social, physical and experiential factors. (Simpson, 1980)

The following patterns have been identified:

- Non-exceptional individuals with the most positive social adjustment have the most accepting attitudes toward handicapped persons.(Lazar, Haughton and Orpet, 1977)
- Females generally seem to be more accepting of handicapped persons than are males. (Goodman, Gottlieb and Harrison, 1972; Newman, 1978)
- Persons with previous positive experience with handicapped persons tend to have more favourable attitudes toward them than do those lacking prior experiences. (Jaffee, 1966; Bateman, 1962)

- Younger children have more accepting attitudes of the handicapped than do older children. (Billings, 1963; Newman, 1978)

Simpson, (1980), has suggested several apriori factors which must be considered by special education personnel before the regular teacher can begin a concerted effort to change the attitudes of regular class students. The special education resource teacher must make every effort towards establishing rapport between special class personnel and regular class children and teachers; and becoming an integrated component of the faculty and school.

Almost every normalization program has been founded on the premise that the regular education students will accept their exceptional peers. (Tunick et al., 1980) This phenomena has been called "highly presumptuous and unrealistic." (Simpson, 1980)

Group discussion is seen as a highly effective method for improving the attitudes of regular students towards exceptional students. There is a vast amount of research on attitude change techniques. In general, it appears that after discussion there is a polarizing effect (each group harbours its position even more strongly than before discussion). Group discussion is the most effective technique, but only under carefully structured conditions.

There is evidence which indicates that proximity does not guarantee acceptance. (Gottlieb, 1974, 1978) Finding out if children really accept their handicapped peers is difficult, because there is evidence to show that they may respond with answers they think are acceptable, rather than their real feelings. (Siperstein et al., 1977) Most studies of acceptance focus on the spontaneous behaviour of young children. (Peterson et al., 1977; Fredericks et al., 1978) Older children's attitudes, when examined by questionnaire, revealed some fairly positive attitudes towards severely mentally handicapped peers. (Rose, 1979) There was, however, a dearth of social interaction reported.

It has been shown that parental attitudes have profound influence on the attitudes of the young. (Kaufman, 1977) Obviously then, attitude change cannot occur in the classroom unless parents are involved and supportive. The classroom teacher will have to work (along with the special education teacher) with parents of non-handicapped children and parents of handicapped children. The two parent groups will have different needs in order to facilitate attitude change. (Howarth, 1983)

▸Post Integration

Although mainstreaming does allow for increased social contact between handicapped and non-handicapped individuals, it does not ensure the social acceptance or increased appropriate social behaviour of handicapped students. (Fox, 1989).

In fact, results of studies involving the educable mentally retarded, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, visually impaired and hearing impaired indicate that, in general, handicapped students are not well accepted by their non-handicapped peers.

Very little research has been done on the social effects of integration on the non-handicapped.

The research findings generally indicate that the social integration of handicapped students has not been successfully achieved. It has been suggested (Gresham-1982, Madden & Slavin-1983) that handicapped children are placed in regular classrooms without the necessary prerequisite social skills and without ongoing support to enhance these skills. Non-handicapped students are also not provided with support to modify their attitudes towards their handicapped peers which is likely to result in increased social isolation and more restrictive social environments.
It has been suggested that the concept of mainstreaming to promote social interaction is desirable; it is, however, based on faulty assumptions:

- **that** physical placement of children with handicaps in regular classrooms will result in increased social interaction between handicapped and non-handicapped children;

- **that** regular class placement for handicapped children will result in greater social acceptance of the handicapped children by their non-handicapped peers;

- **that** handicapped children in mainstreamed classes are assumed to model the behaviour of their non-handicapped peers. (Gresham, 1982)

Attempts to socially integrate should not be abandoned, rather, in order to ensure the social-emotional growth of integrated students, appropriate support services must be in place. (Alberta Education, 1991)

Financial and Human Resources
As already indicated, before the integration option is available in every school board in Ontario, there must be a recognition, on the part of the government that additional resources, both financial and personnel, must be provided. This requires a clear link between policy makers and financial decision makers.

The cost of having the integration option available in every school board depends very much on the model of integration that is adopted; the nature of the definitions being considered; and, decisions with regard to the relative roles of the education system and other agencies in the provision of support services.

To examine the costs associated with integration, we need a clear description of the characteristics of the service delivery model. To date, little data is available which compares the costs of operating an inclusive school to the more traditional approaches of serving exceptional students. (Alberta Education)

Research has shown that integration should not be viewed as a cost-saving measure. Funding for special education services tends to fluctuate according to economic conditions...when there is money available, larger numbers of special needs students tend to be identified. In times of budget restraint, support services are often reduced

or withdrawn (Affleck, Madge, Adams & Lowenbraun, 1988 in Alberta Education).

The right to educational access and opportunity has increased demands, expectations and dependence on schools to provide programs to meet the needs of all children and has increased the costs due to a broadening range of programs and staffing (Canadian Council of Ministers of Education, 1983 in Murray Hayes, 1989).

A related development noted by the Canadian Education Association (1985) suggests that the responsibility for educational programs which was formerly provided by health, social services, and community groups has shifted to education departments and school boards. The provision of related or specialized support services such as health services in an integrated education program were noted as a possible barrier to integration by Biklen (1985) and as a cost consideration by the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education (1985).

In discussing financial considerations for integration in Integration: a Review of Current Literature, Murray Hayes, 1989 concluded that ...Financial support for integrated education services has, in the view of Hasazi (1980) and the Council for Exceptional (1987), made it feasible and flexible for school districts to provide special education for those who need it and at the same time to combine exceptional and regular students and programs.

Benefits for the taxpayer in the view of Striefel (1985) were that self-contained public education was less costly than residential care, and movement of exceptional students from public education into the work force contributed to the tax base. Killoran, Striefel, Yanito, Quintero (1985) and Montobbio (1985) believe that productive individuals with handicaps not only save money for society but improve the quality of life for everyone.

The CEA (1985) and Wang and Baker (1986), and Ysseldyke and Algozzine (1984) identified the need for inservice and information programs both before and after implementation of integration, special equipment and materials, and additional support services for the regular classroom teacher and the students in an integrated program. The Council of Ministers identified these needs as well as staff salaries as cost factors. The Council of Ministers also identified funding to programs rather than to individual students as a cost consideration. Relative to budgetary planning was the concern identified by Howarth (1983) and Little (1985) that some parents and professionals view integration as a way to cut costs. (Hayes, 1989)

The Alberta study (1990) looking at the cost implications of operating an inclusive school program, made the following assumptions:

- psychological services for purposes of identifying students according to categories for placement purposes may be reduced
- program costs for mildly handicapped students may be reduced as "regular" classroom teachers assume greater responsibility for program planning and implementation

- the cost of inservice and consultative support services to regular teachers for the purposes of diagnosis and program planning may be increased
- students with moderate to severe handicapping conditions may require increased one-on-one aide support
- transportation costs may be reduced as all students would remain in their neighbourhood schools.

Any action plan developed to provide for the implementation of the integration option must include a thorough analysis of the relative costs of providing these programs and the potential sources of funds for required services.

V. SUMMARY

It was the intention of this paper to provide insight into the issues that school boards face when deciding how best to further the integration of exceptional pupils into regular classrooms.

In order to put the proposed legislative and policy changes related to special education in perspective, the current legislative situation in Ontario was included, as well as a description of legislation in other selected provinces and in the United States.

Although definitions of integration are presented, it is clear that implementation is the bone of contention for implicit in the definition of integration are assessment, placement and program issues. Various integration models currently being utilized are summarized and the need for a monitoring and evaluation process stressed.

Focus on the issues that need to be addressed before the integration option is available in every school board in Ontario highlighted the need for:

- an examination of the role of the education system in the provision of specialized services
- teacher education
- parent and peer education and orientation
- financial and human resources

The lack of adequate research on and analysis of the impact of the integration option on secondary school program has been highlighted. The need for an indepth financial analysis of the various integration options prior to implementation has been underscored.

In summary, research has shown that the following eight criteria are predictive of success in integration:

- The teaching staff and the principal must be committed to the concept.
- There must be teacher training in behavioral principles and classroom management prior to mainstreaming.
- There must be positive, co-operative relationships among teachers and principals.
- There should be prior stability of staff and children in the special education class.
- The exceptional students should possess academic and social skill comparable to the skill of the regular students.
- The exceptional students should be close in age to the regular students in the mainstreamed classroom.
- There should be no serious budgetary restraints to hinder the program.
- Students, teachers and administrators should have a positive attitude towards the exceptional student. (Howarth)

"What we can conclude from the views of those school boards surveyed is that integration just for the sake of integration is not supported. Programs must be developed for each child to suit his or her own needs, strengths and weaknesses. If not, there is reduced motivation. Often we push integration without adequate resources and the exceptional children are worse off" (CEA, 1985).

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